

Kenny, but other, more prominent fighters were starting to draw the color line. The most notable of these men was Harry Greb.

Leo Flynn had signed Panama Joe for a ten round preliminary bout against Al Rogers, an upstate, white middleweight at Syracuse, New York in early December 1919. The main event that night was supposed to have been Harry Greb and Clay Turner. When Flynn and Gans reached Syracuse they learned that Al Rogers had ducked out of his bout with Joe. Citing that he did not wish to fight a black man in front of his home crowd, Rogers, simply begged out. Promoter Joe Dunfee attempted to bring in a late substitute but could find no takers. To add to his problems, the day before the event, Clay Turner wired from New York City that he had injured his leg and could not meet Greb. The wily Dunfee approached Flynn with the idea that Gans and Greb could draw a similar, if not larger crowd than Greb-Turner. Leo, after asking for more money, agreed. It is unclear as to whether or not Greb knew of the substitution, but when he entered the Arena Athletic Club ring and saw, the long, dark Panama Joe Gans standing across from him, he was not pleased. Harry refused to fight and drew the ire of the crowd when he waved them off as they razed him. Reddy Mason, Greb's manager, addressed the crowd and attempted to explain the particulars of the situation, but was shouted down quickly. *The Syracuse Herald* reported that Reddy's speech basically boiled down to the fact that "He and Greb drew the color line". The crowd settled down when Greb took over, pleading his case to the crowd. However, when he used the word "nigger" in reference to Gans, the crowd roared its disapproval. Panama Joe himself took exception to Harry's slur and began to cross the ring towards his adversary. Greb held up his open hands and immediately apologized to Gans for the wrong doing. Harry then offered to box Young Fischer, who was in the crowd, but the latter was not interested. Harry and Mason then made a quick exit from the ring amid a showering of catcalls and debris. The Herald reported the next day, "Panama Joe Gans is not a champion, but champions and other near champions, such as Greb, would rather avoid such a "tough bird", and Gans scales lighter than Greb. While Greb now draws the color line it was just a few years ago that he fought Willie Langford, the colored middleweight at Buffalo. But Greb has since got himself a reputation and can now "pick" his opponents."

The summer of 1919 was a long and scary one. The "Red Summer" saw the ugly face of racism in America boil over. It began in Chicago in July, when a young black boy went swimming at a Lake Michigan beach. Not a very good swimmer the boy found himself a sizeable log to cling onto so that he could join his friends in deeper waters. Unable to control himself or the log the boy slowly drifted over towards a roped off section of the beach with a sign that read, "for Whites only". Panicked by his inability to paddle back towards his friends the boy began to flail wildly. From the beach a group of white men began to taunt the boy and then watched as the boy slipped into the water and drowned. A fight ensued between the white men and a group of black men who had come searching for the boy. When the Chicago police arrived on the scene they refused to arrest any of the white men who had witnessed the drowning but did arrest two of their black attackers. The incident set off a rash of riots in Chicago. Whites formed gangs and invaded black neighborhoods, beating their inhabitants, looting stores and burning buildings. Some blacks retaliated by forming their own mobs and committing similar acts in white neighborhoods. By the time the National Guard had restored order, 15 whites had been killed and 153 injured and as many as 23 blacks had been killed and 178 injured. The incidents in Chicago began a chain reaction of similar incidents across the nation, forcing social experts to state that "there might be no solution in sight for America's racial differences". By the time order had been restored, there had been a total of 35 race riots